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ABSTRACT

This four-week unit of study for grades 1-3 provides information and activities on 17 different dinosaurs. A 21-item pre- and post-test and a brief history of dinosaurs precede descriptions and full-page drawings of the following dinosaurs: (1) giant plant-eaters (brachiosaurus, brontosaurus, and diplodocus); (2) giant meat-eaters (allosaurus, gorgosaurus, and tyrannosaurus); (3) plated dinosaurs (stegosaurus); (4) armored dinosaurs (ankylosaurus); (5) duckbills and parrot beaks (psittacosaurus and trachodon); (6) horned dinosaurs (monoclonius, protoceratops, and triceratops); (7) lightweights (ornithomimus, oviraptor, and procompsognathus); and (8) flying reptiles (rhamphorhynchus). Following an explanation for the disappearance of dinosaurs, an activity section includes riddles, poems, a crossword puzzle, math problems, and additional activities which involve comprehension, writing, and visual perception skills. All activities have a dinosaur theme. Directions for making a dinosaur diorama conclude the activity section. A nine-item bibliography of books about dinosaurs is also included in this guide. This document is part of a collection of materials from the Iowa Education Agency 7 Teacher Center project. (EM)

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DIGGING INTO DINOSAURS

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INTRODUCTION

This unit of study on dinosaurs for grades 1-3 is designed as a 4-week unit with lessons on the characteristics and descriptions of 17 different dinosaurs. The activities can be adjusted according to the age and abilities of your students. For example, in first grade the pre and post-test would be given orally; whereas, in third grade the test would be written.

Students are very eager and enthusiastic to learn about dinosaurs. They are fascinated by the descriptions and sizes of various dinosaurs and enjoy learning to pronounce their names.

Other information on dinosaurs may be obtained from:

The Discovery Corner
Lawrence Hall of Science
University of California
Berkley, CA 94720

A book entitled Dinosaurs-Fantastic New View of a Lost Era, by William Stout (160 pages) is available for $12.95. Other materials include a 1 foot by 6 foot poster, "Age of Reptitles" for $4.95; wooden dinosaur sculptures which are bonelike for $7.95-$9.95. Soft sculpture kits of various dinosaurs are available for $7.95-$9.95. The kit includes all materials needed to make a dinosaur.

A study of dinosaurs is almost an escape into fantasy for some students. They are intrigued to learn that creatures like dinosaurs did really exist. Have fun digging into dinosaurs!

Barb Oleson

PRE AND POST-TEST

Answer questions with yes or no

1. Did dinosaurs really roam the earth millions of years ago?_____
2. Did people live when dinosaurs lived?_____
3. Did some dinosaurs eat other dinosaurs?_____
4. A fossil is the remains of a dead animal._____
5. People who hunt fossils are called paleontologists._____
6. Extinct animals means living animals. _____
7. Elephants are extinct today. _____
8. The earth looks the same as it did when dinosaurs lived. _____
9. Petrified means turned to stone. _____
10. Dinosaurs disappeared because they were magic. _____
11. Baby dinosaurs hatched from eggs. _____
12. All dinosaurs were big. _____
13. There were dinosaurs that ate just plants. _____
14. Dinosaurs were the largest animals ever known. _____
15. Dinosaurs were smart. _____
16. There were many kinds of dinosaurs. _____
17. The Tyrannosaurus ate meat. _____
18. Scientists believe that changes in the earth brought an end to the Age of Dinosaurs. _____
19. All dinosaurs were meat-eaters. _____
20. Some dinosaurs walked on two feet._____
21. Dinosaurs were reptiles. _____

HISTORY

The name dinosaur comes from two Greek words meaning "terrible" and "lizard". The dinosaurs were reptiles. They were given the name because some of the first ones scientists found out about were huge and powerful meat eaters.

Dinosaurs were numerous and widespread. Some were big, some little. There were tall ones, short ones, and flat ones. Some walked on two legs and some walked on four legs. There were dinosaurs with horns, webbed feet and coats of armor. There were toothless dinosaurs and dinosaurs with hundreds of teeth. One thing all dinosaurs had in common was that they had legs that lifted their bodies up off the ground so that they could run, leap, or stomp about.

Dinosaurs dominated the world during the Mesozoic Era--from 225 million years ago to 65 million years ago. The Mesozoic is divided into 3 periods:

(225-180 million years ago) the oldest Triassic--
(dinosaurs appeared)
(180-130 million years ago) middle Jurassic
(130-65 million years ago) Cretaceous (died out)

The Age of Reptiles

A reptile is a class of animals which includes the snake, lizards, turtles, crocodiles, and the tuatara (a large lizard of New Zealand).

There were two separate lines of dinosaurs. Their common ancestor, the thecodonts, gave rise to the pterosaurs, or flying reptiles and to the crocodilians. Birds, too, came from the thecodonts, but birds became so different

from their reptile relatives that they are put in a class by themselves.

In the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods the reptiles were at their peak. Dinosaurs ruled the land. Other reptiles ruled the seas.

At the end of the Mesozoic Era the dinosaurs had died out. Of the reptiles that are left today most play minor roles.

Today only small reptiles live where the winters are very cold. Yet fossils tell us that large dinosaurs once lived there.

BRACHIOSAURUS
(brak-ee-uh-SOR-us)

The biggest of all the dinosaurs was the giant Brachiosaurus. Brachiosaurus means "arm lizard". The bones of his forearm were unusually large and that is where he got his name. Its front legs were longer than the back ones.

The Brachiosaurus had a weight of 50 tons and a length of 80 feet. With its head held high, it stood over 40 feet tall. It could have looked over the top of a three-story building. The Brachiosaurus was so heavy--100,000 pounds--that he could barely drag himself around on land. He couldn't fight or run away from his enemies so he spent most of his time in the water chewing plants.

On the top of his head, the Brachiosaurus had a dome with nostrils in it. He could stay hidden under water with just this little breathing dome showing.

The Brachiosaurus was a slow-moving harmless creature that ate nothing but plants. It had a brain smaller than a kitten's. In proportion to its weight, it had fewer ounces of brain than any other backboned animal we know about.

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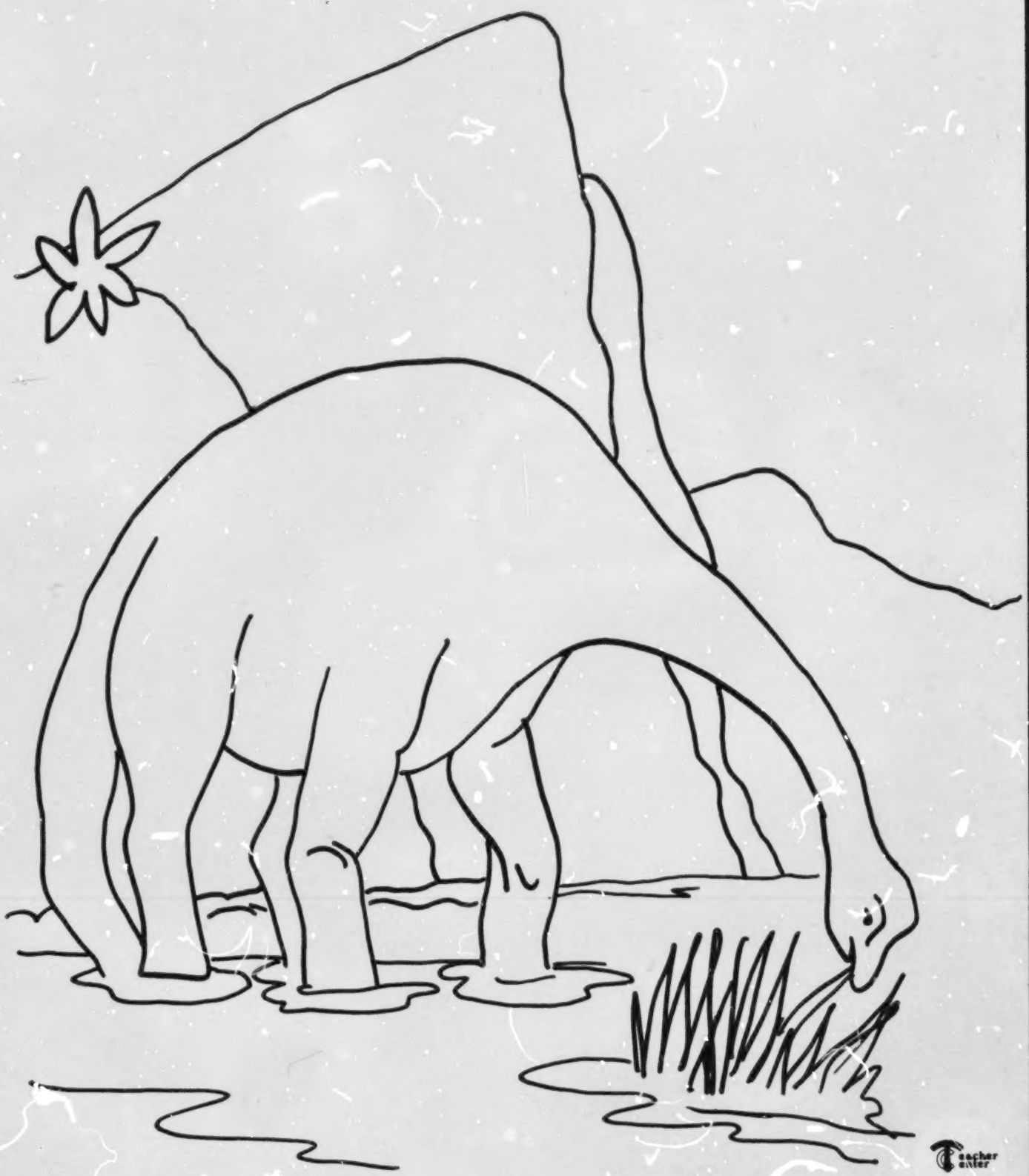


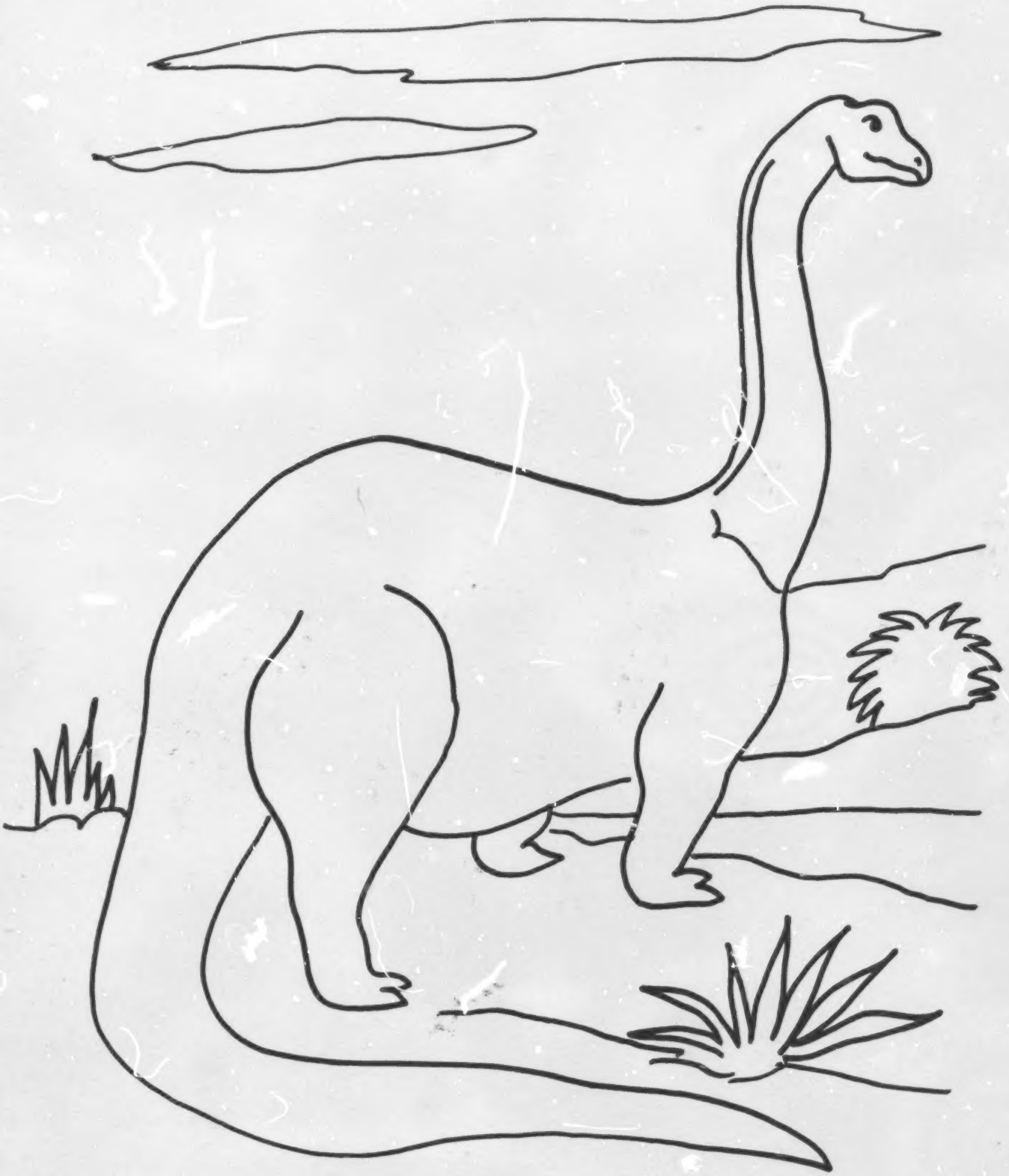
The Brachiosaurus was the heaviest dinosaur

BRONTOSAURUS
(bron-tuh-SOR-us)

The name Brontosaurus means "thunder lizard". From the end of its tail to the tip of its nose the Brontosaurus was 70 feet long. It was about 15 feet high at the shoulder and weighted 60,000 pounds, as much as seven full-grown elephants. Its four legs were stout like tree trunks.

The head was small with a small mouth. Its teeth were weak and not good for anything but chewing the plants that grew in the water. Brontosaurus spent most of its life standing or wading in shallow lakes and streams just eating. The water helped to support his weight.

The Brontosaurus had no weapon other than its long tail for protection against enemies. Its brain probably wasn't much bigger than that of a newborn kitten. When a meat-eating dinosaur appeared, the Brontosaurus would have been safe if it went into deep enough water. The flesh eaters couldn't get at it and probably couldn't even see it with only the top of its head sticking out of the water.



Brontosaurus

DIPLODOCUS
(dip-LAH-duh-cuss)

Diplodocus got his name from the two Greek words meaning "double beam". He had a body with two long beams sticking out--one in front and one in back.

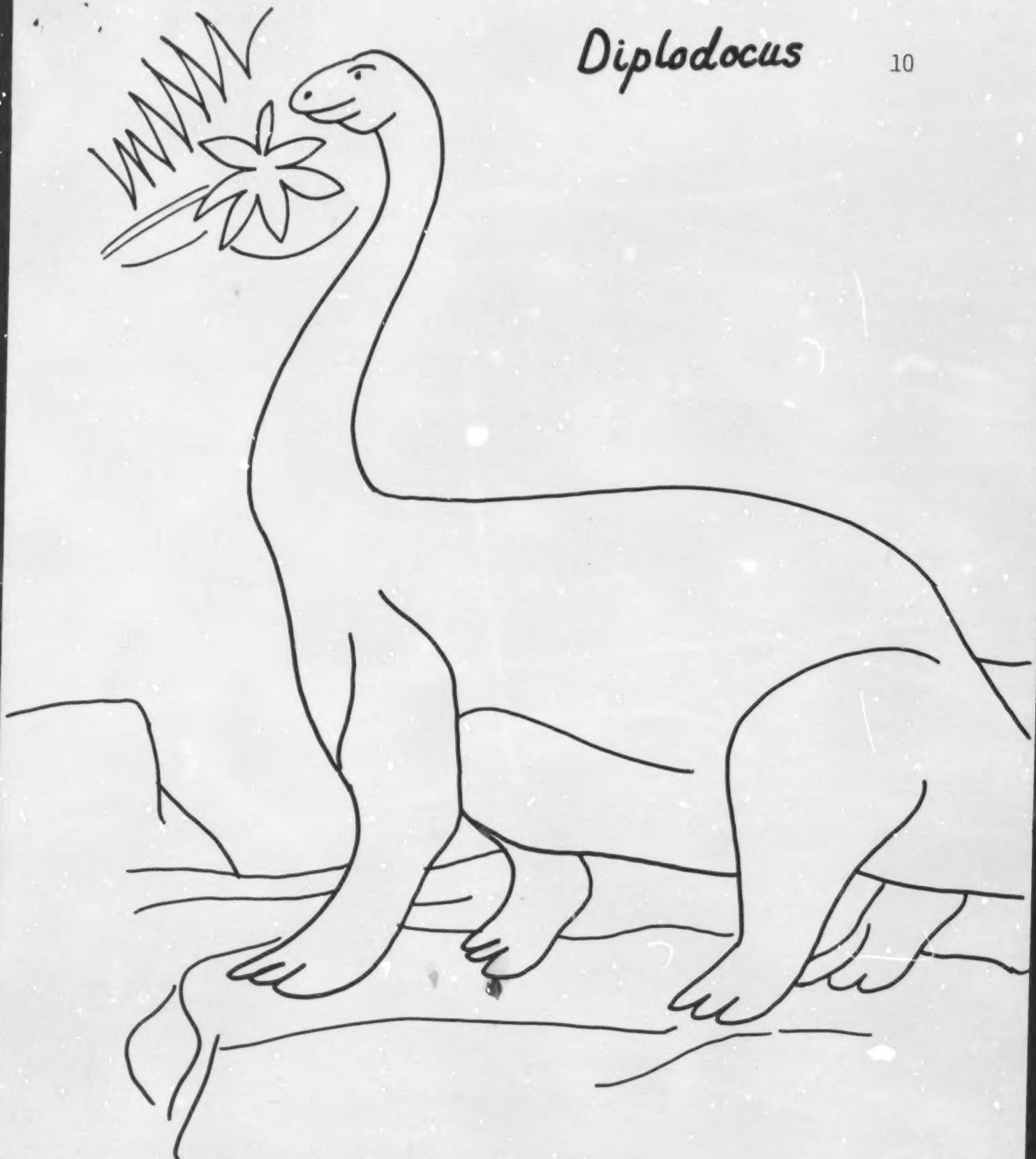
Like the other big plant-eating dinosaurs, Diplodocus had a very small head. Diplodocus was the longest of the dinosaurs--87 1/2 feet long. That's about as long as seven cars standing bumper to bumper. Most of this dinosaur was neck and tail.

Diplodocus spent most of his time in the water. His nostrils and eyes were high up on its small head. He could keep himself well hidden under water and his long neck could stretch way up, letting him just breathe and see.

He wasn't very smart, but he knew how to hide from his enemies.

All the big, slow wading dinosaurs were probably the first to die out. They needed low swampy land and the kind of soft plants that grew there. Their teeth weren't strong enough to chew the tougher dry plants.

Diplodocus



The Diplodocus was the longest dinosaur.

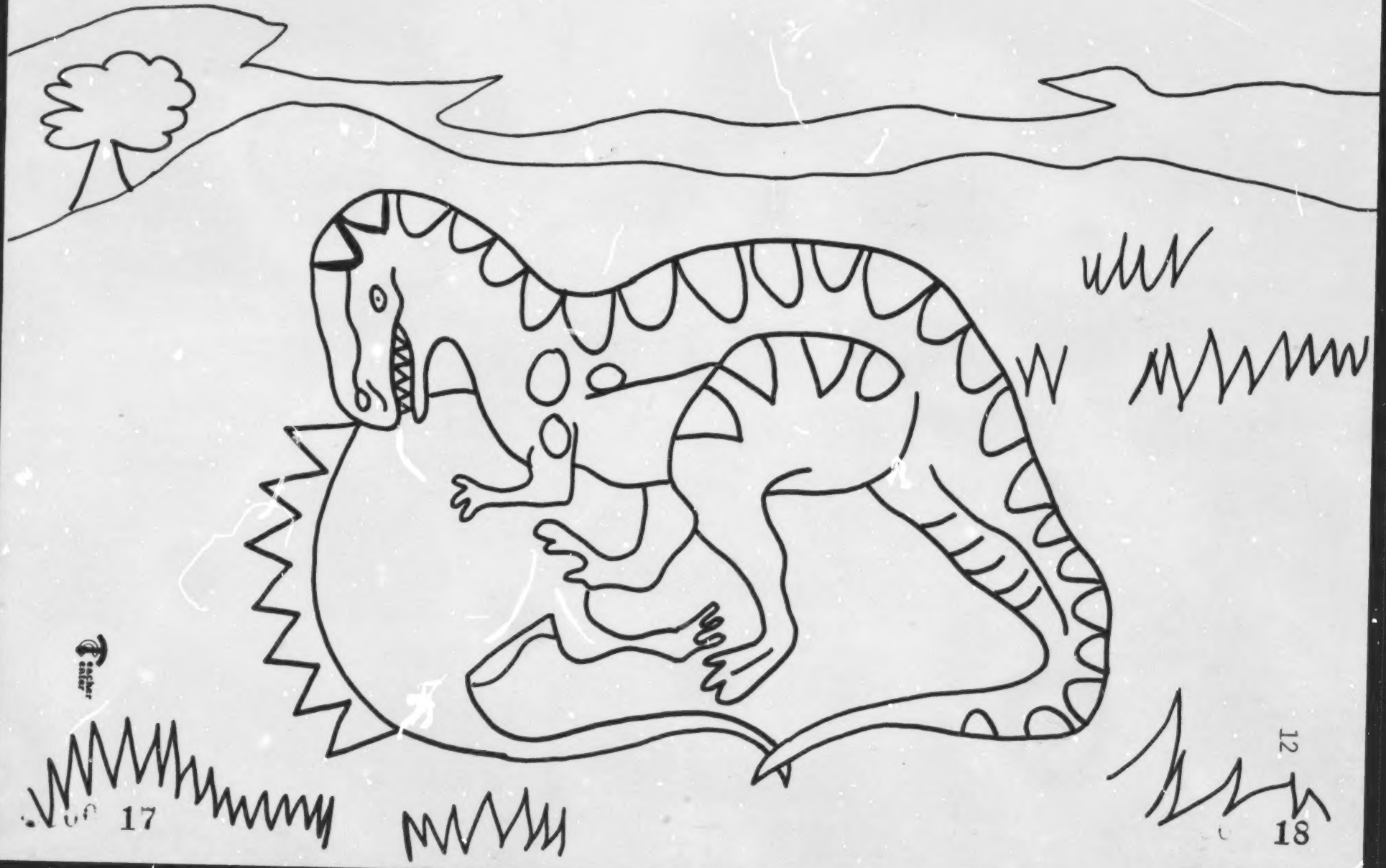
ALLOSAURUS
(al-uh-SOR-us)

The Allosaurus comes from two Greek words meaning "other lizard". He was a giant meat-eating dinosaur who lived on the other giant dinosaurs of his time.

The Allosaurus was 35 feet long from the tip of his big tail to the front of his huge jaws. Its 2 1/2 foot head had an enormous mouth with rows of sharp, curved 3-inch teeth. Its hands were 3-fingered and on each finger was a razor sharp talon. It stood some 15 feet tall as it stalked or leaped about on its strong hind legs. The Allosaurus had strong, heavy hind legs on which he ran.

Although some of the plant-eating dinosaurs were much bigger than the Allosaurus, they could not fight him. He was faster, and his sharp teeth and claws were dangerous weapons. Consequently, many of the plant eaters waded out into the water to escape the Allosaurus. The Allosaurus also ate smaller dinosaurs.

Allosaurus

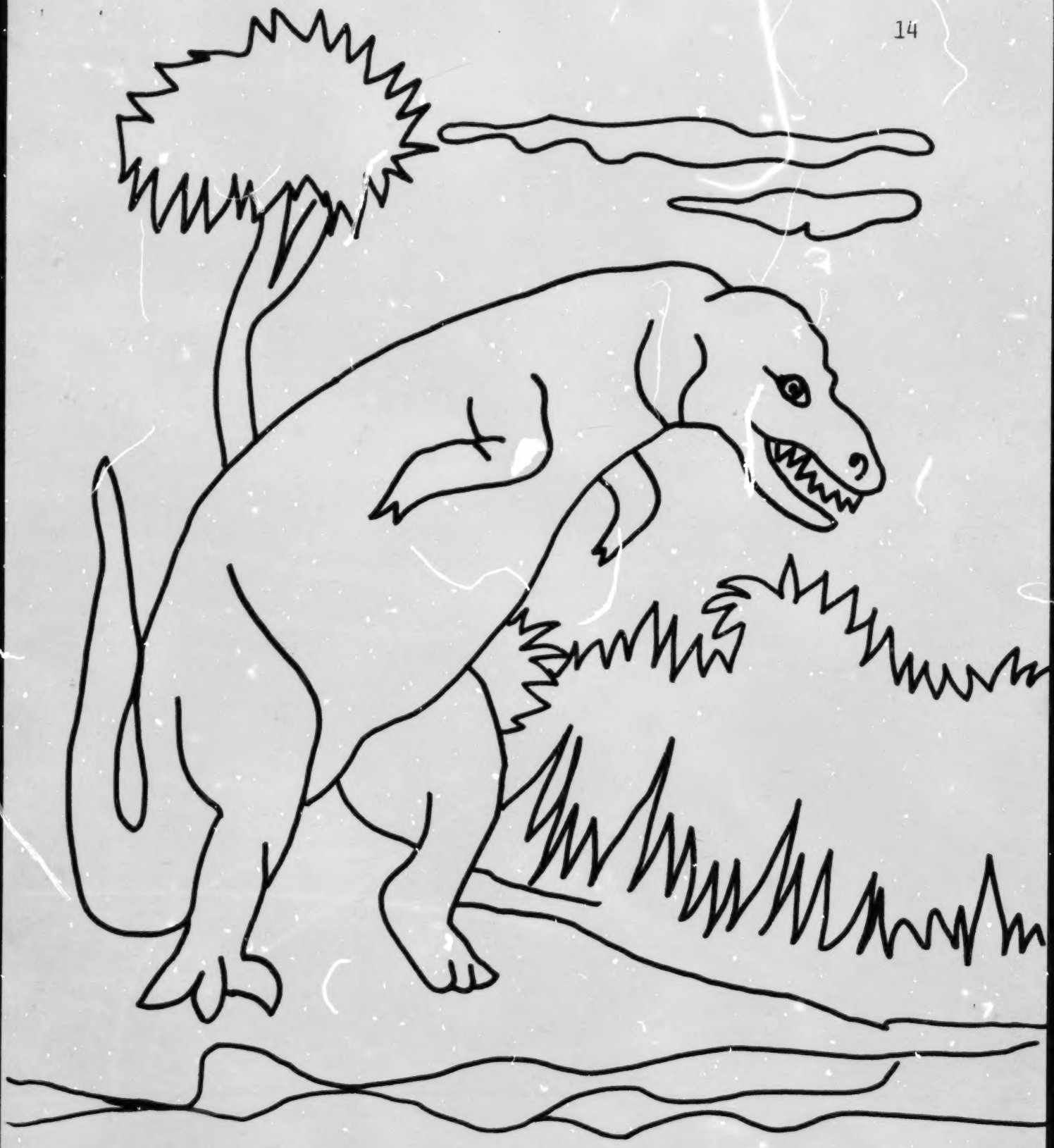


GORGOSAURUS
(GOR-go-sor-us)

Gorgosaurus means "terrible lizard." The Gorgosaurus walked about on long, strong hind legs and had a long tail for balancing. Its bones were large and heavy and the Gorgosaurus had great strength.

This meat eater reached a length of nearly 35 feet and had a mouth full of long, daggerlike teeth. The legs were long and powerful for running and fighting. The front legs were very short with small clawed "hands".

Gorgosaurus was a terrible fighter and closely related to Tyrannosaurus.



A dangerous hunter, Gorgosaurus

TYRANNOSAURUS REX
(ty-ran-uh-SOR-us rex)

The most famous of all the dinosaurs was this fierce king of the meat eaters. His name means "king of the tyrant lizards".

This king was nearly 50 feet long. When he stood up on his heavy hind legs, he was nearly 20 feet tall. A tall man would have reached only to its knee. It weighed 7 1/2 tons. The claws on Tyrannosaurus's three-toed feet were about eight inches long. Its huge head was nearly 5 feet long; and its jaws were filled with inch-thick, 6-inch long teeth, pointed like daggers.

Tyrannosaurus could open its huge mouth four feet wide and could easily swallow, in one gulp, most animals that live today.

His front legs were so small that he couldn't even reach his head. But Tyrannosaurus Rex didn't need them. His dreadful jaws and heavy clawed hind feet were all he needed for attacking other dinosaurs.

It would have taken a lot of meat to keep the big Tyrannosaurus's body going so he probably spent most of his time hunting for food.

Tyrannosaurus Rex was not afraid of any other living creature. His teeth could bite through the toughest hide and crunch the thickest bones. No wonder the other dinosaurs that lived when he did had to hide in the water or protect themselves with armor.

The Tyrannosaurus Rex was fiercest of them all. 22

STEGOSAURUS
(steg-uh-SUR-us)

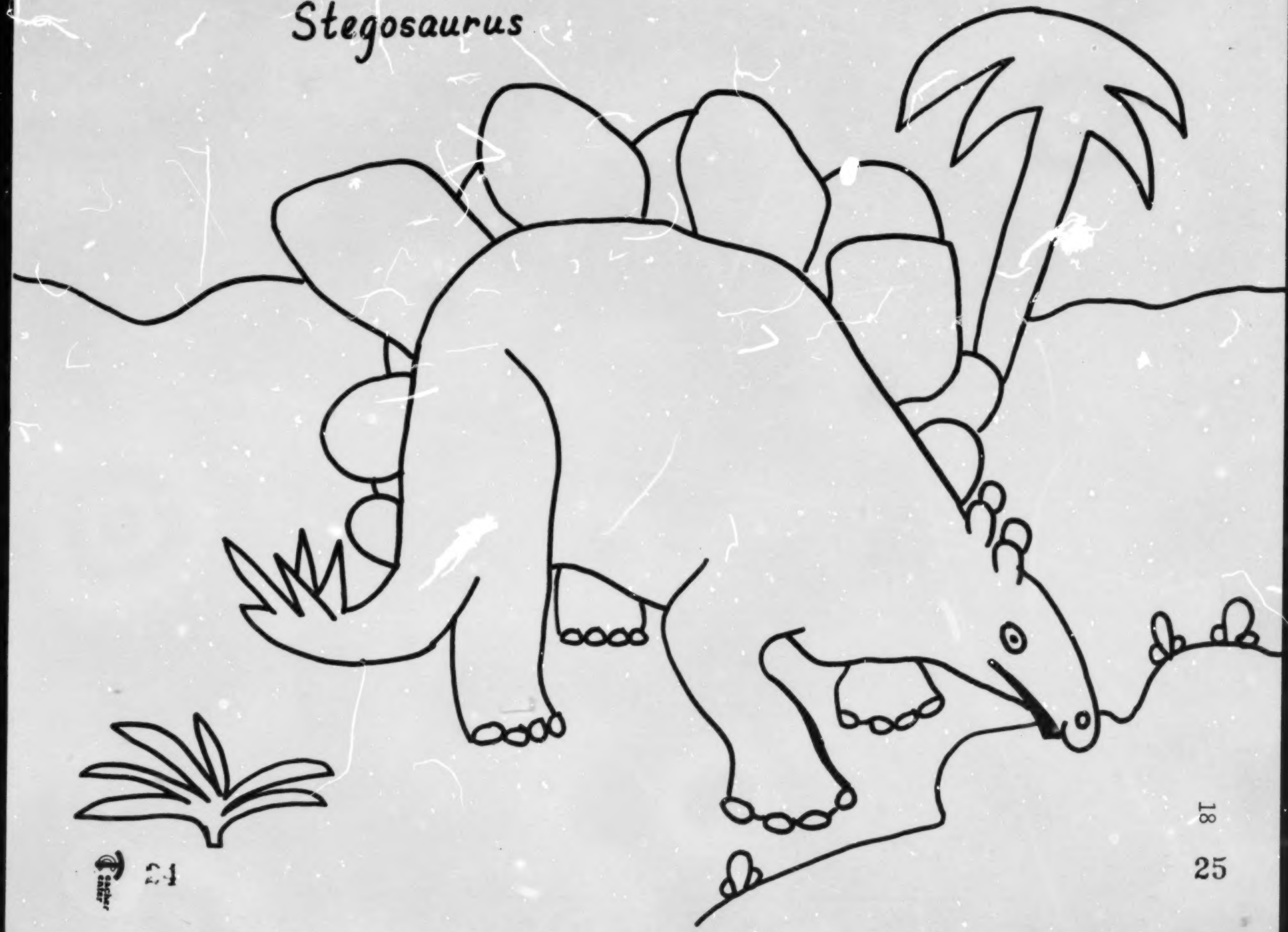
The "cover lizard" was covered with armor and bony plates. Stegosaurus was from 18-25 feet long and it weighed 7 or 8 tons--much more than a big elephant weighs. But its narrow, birdlike head was only 16 inches long. The brain weighed only about 2 ounces and was no bigger than a walnut, only large enough to work his jaws and front legs. Back near his hips was a place in his spine twenty times larger than his brain, a second brain that worked his hind legs and his tail.

The Stegosaurus walked on all fours. Its hind legs were much longer than its front ones. His hips were high in the air and his head close to the ground. He could nibble at low plants easily, but he must have moved very clumsily.

Stegosaurus grew rows of bony armor along its back and four bony spikes on its tail to help keep it safe from its enemies. The plates on its neck were small but they got bigger the farther back they went until those at the hips were two feet high. Each plate was about two inches thick and covered with tough, horny skin.

If attacked, the Stegosaurus would swing its heavy, spiked tail from side to side trying to hit the enemy. His armor and tail gave him some protection from his fierce meat-eating enemies. Any enemy getting hit with his club-tail would soon leave Stegosaurus alone.

Stegosaurus



ANKLYOSAURUS
(an-kil-uh-SOR-us)

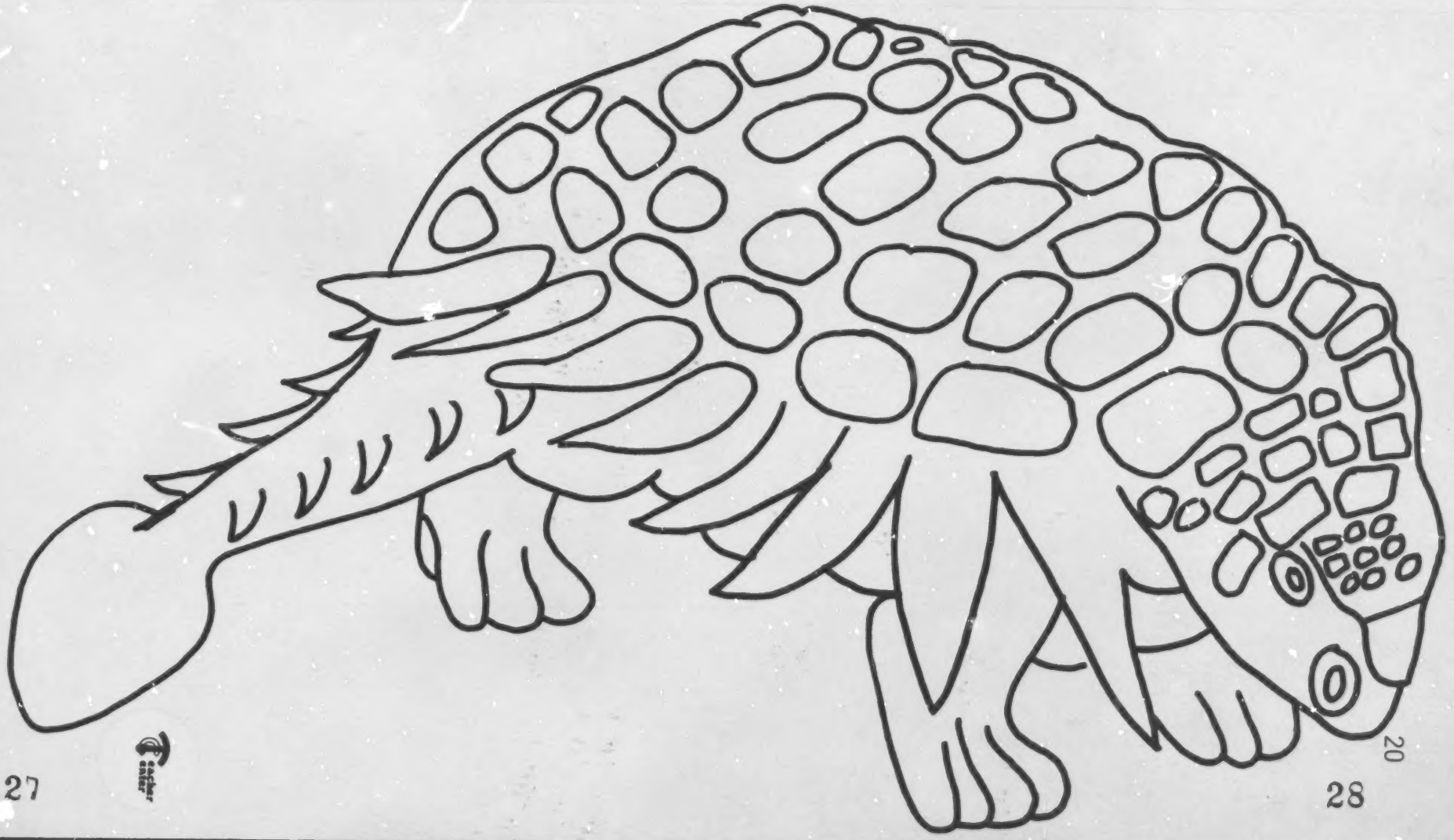
This "curved lizard" got his name because of the way his ribs curved heavily over his back. Anklyosaurus was about 15 feet long and 4-5 feet in height. This plant eater could easily defend itself against the meat eaters.

Anklyosaurus's head, neck, back and tail were covered with a bumpy armor of thick, hard ovals of bone embedded in tough skin. There were shields of bony plates covering its back, smaller shields covering its face and a tail that ended with a huge, round mass of bone like a club.

If Anklyosaurus was attacked, it crouched down with its legs tucked beneath itself. The hungry Tyrannosaurus could not bite through the mass of bony bumps on the Anklyosaurus's back.

The Anklyosaurus, however, didn't depend on its armor alone for protection. It could fight well with its tail. Any meat eater who tried to eat this dinosaur would get a strong whack from that heavy tail.

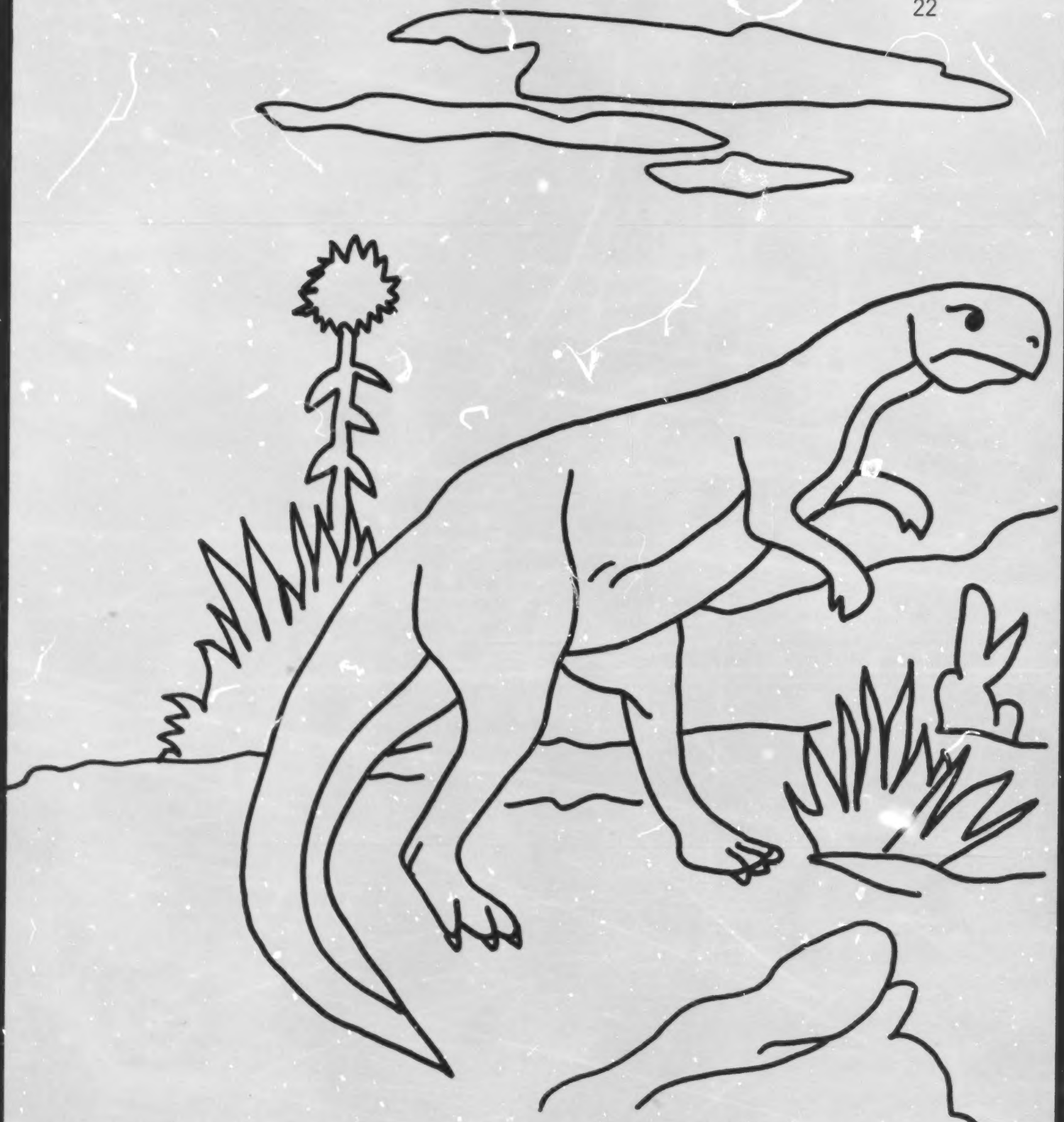
Ankylosaurus



PSITTACOSAURUS
(sit-a-ko-SOR-us)

Psittacosaurus means "parrot lizard". It was a small plant eater that walked in a two-legged fashion. It measured four feet in length.

It had a parrot-like beak that all the horned dinosaurs had. And it had the beginnings of a neck shield



The Psittacosaurus had a sharp, pointed beak

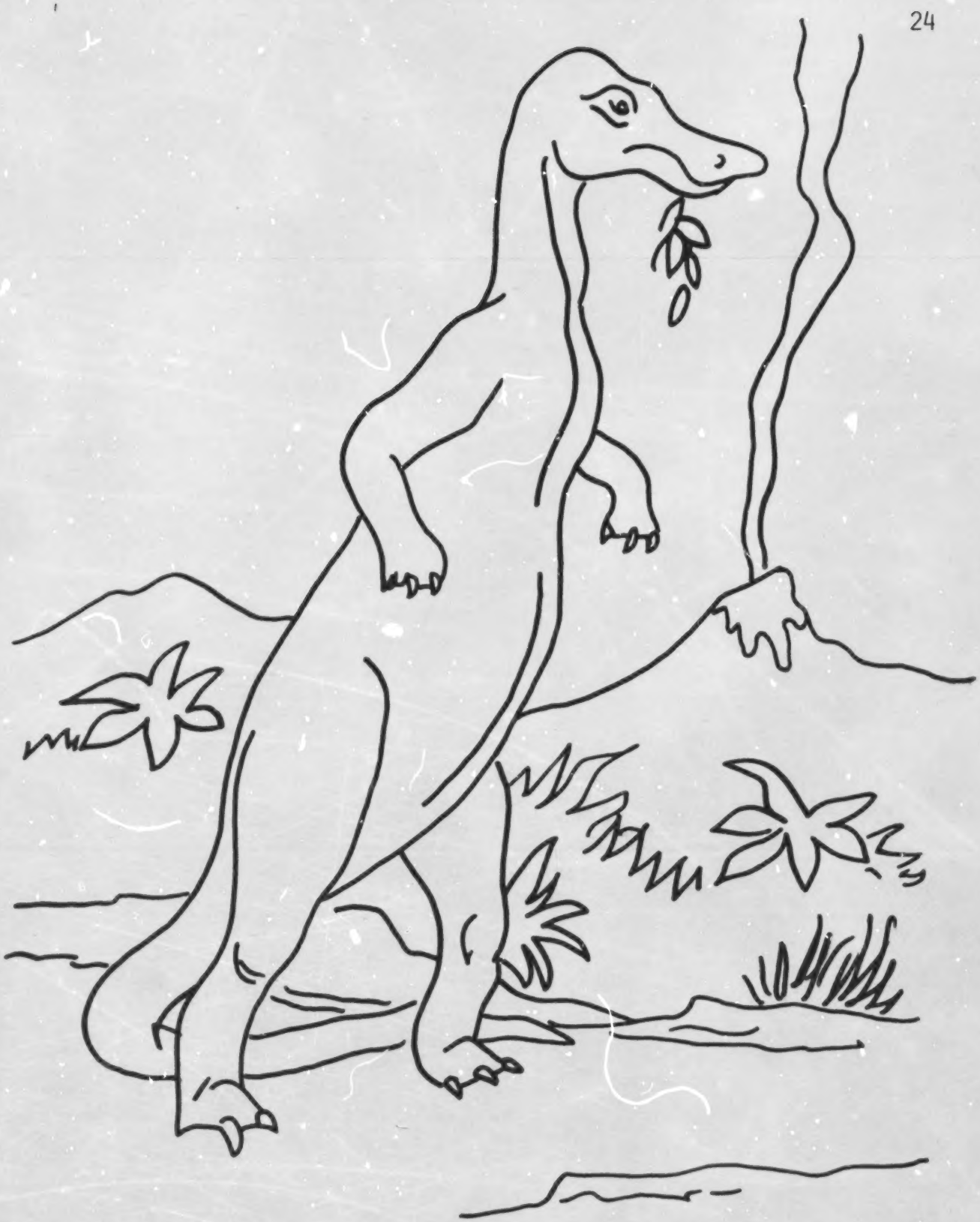
TRACHODON
(TRAK-uh-don)

Trachodon means "rough-toothed." This dinosaur got his name because he had 2,000 teetn in his large mouth. It had a great, flattened mouth just like the bill of a duck so many people call it the duck-billed dinosaur.

Trachodon was about 30 feet long. It could walk on all fours, but it often walked on just its heavy hind legs. It stood about 18 feet tall.

Trachodon spent most of its time in the water. His heavy tail and webbed feet would have helped him swim well. His duck-bill would have been a good shovel for digging plants out of the mud.

These large reptiles couldn't fight or protect themselves from meat-eating dinosaurs that killed them for food. So when a meat-eating dinosaur such as a Tryrannosaurus attacked them, they tried to get into the water and stayed there. They developed webbed feet and duck-bills and special ways of breathing in the water.



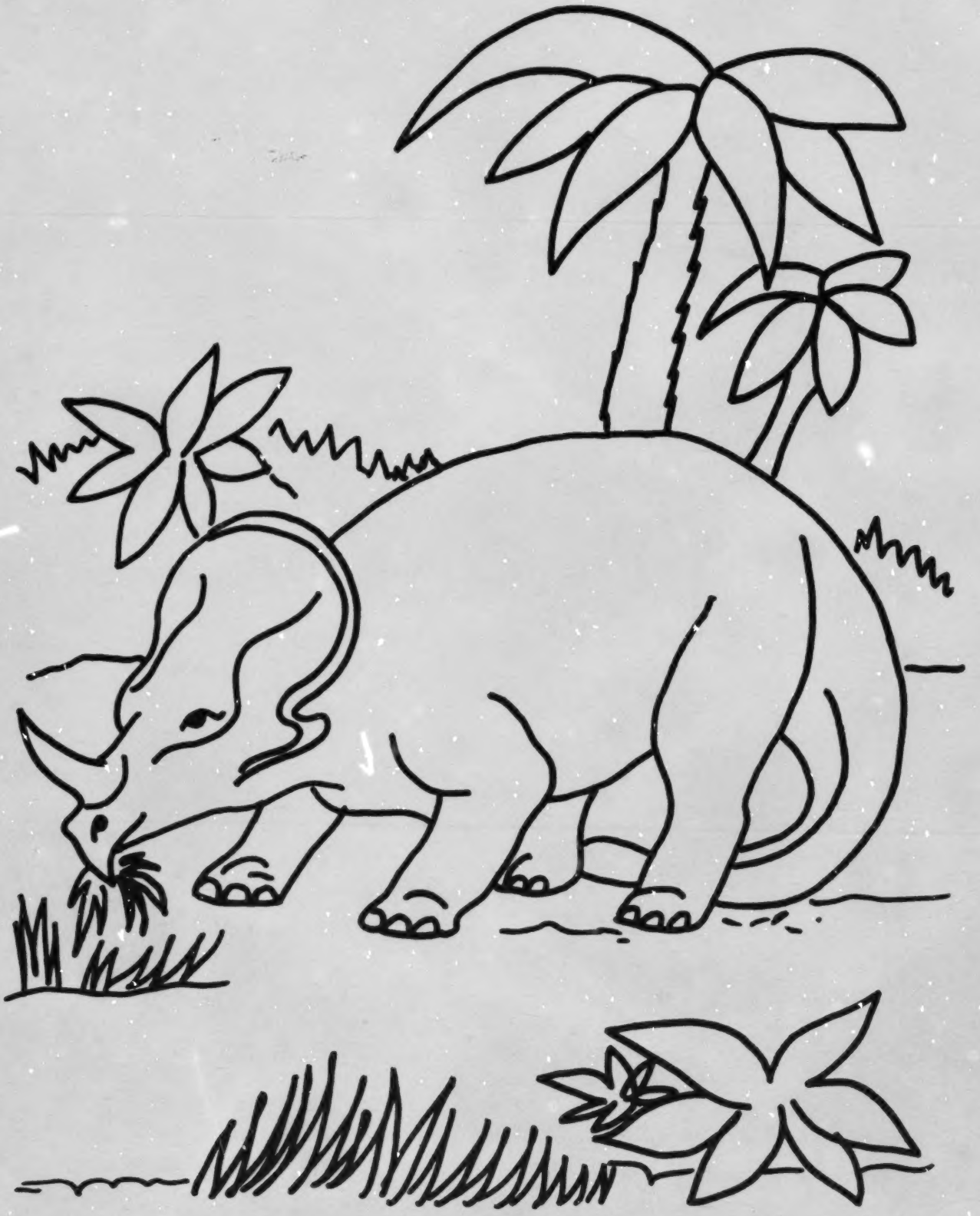
A Trachodon had a bill that looked like a duck's

MONOCLONIUS
(Mon-o-klon-e-us)

Monoclonius means "one conqueror". Its name comes from the large horn on the dinosaur's nose and two small horns above its eyes.

This dinosaur was quite large, measuring about 18 feet in length. The head was large and there was a large collar-like shield or frill made of bone. This strange collar protected the neck region and held the head up. Monoclonius had a parrot-like beak.

In battle the Monoclonius had one weapon--the long, sharp horn on its nose. If the horn failed to be effective, Monoclonius lost the battle. The Monoclonius was strictly a land animal.



Monoclonius had a single horn

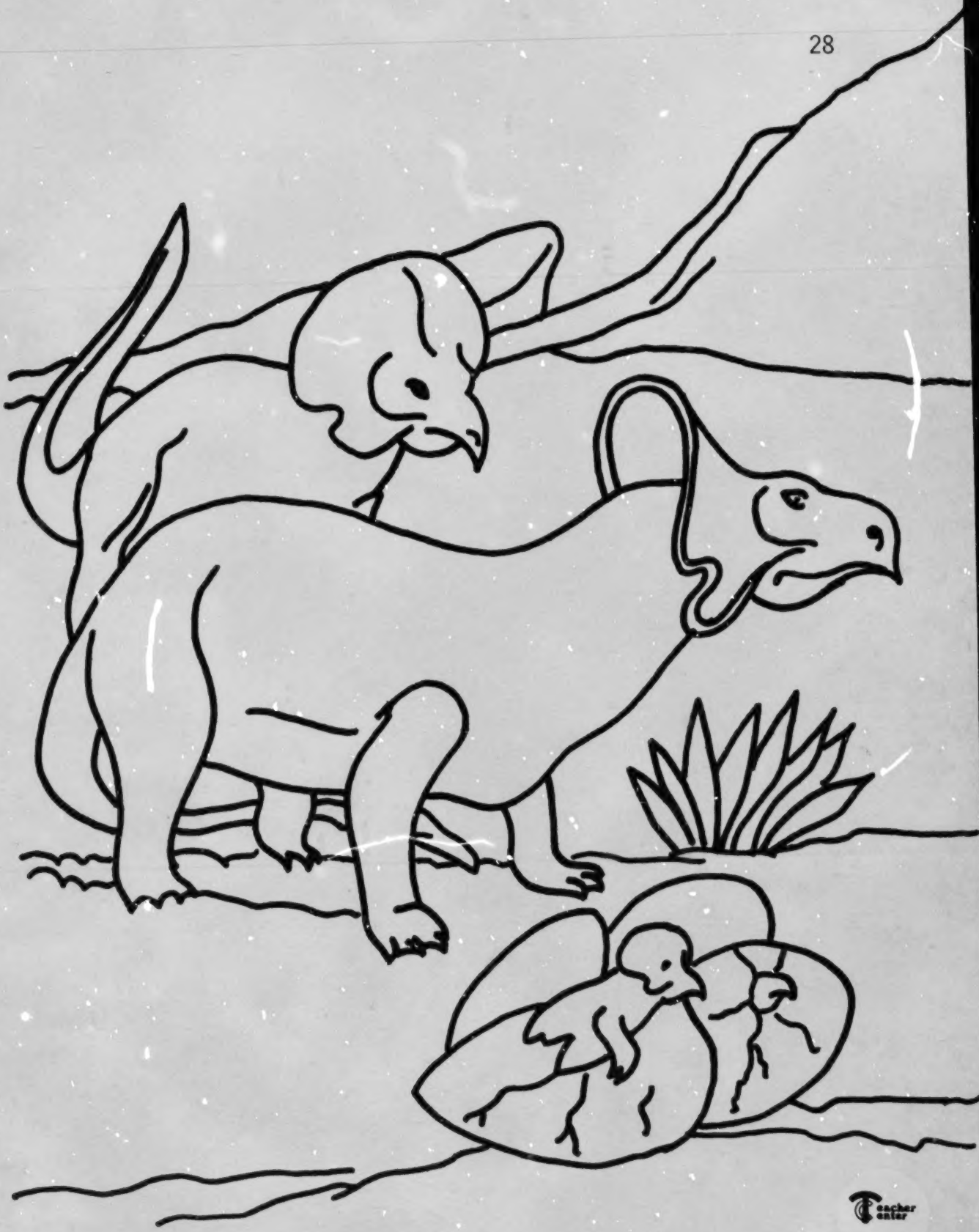
PROTOCERATOPS
(proh-toh-SER-uh-tops)

This name comes from three Greek words that mean "first horn-face". It did not, however, have any horns. It had the parrot-like beak and it had a medium-sized neck shield that reached back behind the head.

Protoceratops was the smallest of his family, as he grew only to about five or six feet in length. Protoceratops and his family were the last of the dinosaurs to appear on earth. He walked on four short legs, close to the ground.

The Protoceratops ate plants. In addition to teeth in the back of its jaws, it had four tiny ones in the front.

The first dinosaur eggs ever discovered were Protoceratops' eggs. Scientists were able to study the growth of this dinosaur from a baby to a grown-up.



A Protoceratops or horned-faced dinosaur

TRICERATOPS
(try-SER-uh-tops)

The best known of the horned dinosaurs is the Triceratops. The name means "three-horned face". Triceratops had a horn over each eye and one on its nose. The horns on its eyes were 6 feet long, and the horn on its nose was 3 feet long.

Triceratops was 25 feet long and weighed about 12 tons--nearly twice as much as an African elephant.

The hind legs were much longer than its front legs. On its hind feet it had four stubby toes with hooves. The front feet had five toes each with two small toes on the outside. The three larger toes had hooves.

Although Triceratops ate plants, he was a fighter. Triceratops probably charged at his enemies with his horns. He had strong neck muscles and a bony shield behind the horns to protect the rest of his body from enemies.

Triceratops is known as the Three-Horn-Face

ORNITHOMIMUS
(or-nith-o-MIME-us)

Orithomimus means "bird imitator". It was about the same size as an ostrich. Both have the same kind of legs and tiny heads on top of skinny necks. It had a toothless bill almost exactly like the bill of an ostrich.

Ornithomimus was a reptile and an ostrich is a bird. The Ornithomimus had long, slendar arms instead of wings and a dry, leathery skin instead of feathers. And, the Ornithomimus had a long tail.

The Ornithomimus had no teeth. Scientists think that this dinosaur became chiefly an egg eater.

The Ornithomimus was a bird hunter

OVIRAPTOR
(o-vi-RAPT-or)

Oviraptor means "egg robber". It was a small dinosaur, only 3 feet in length. It had a long neck and legs and a small head, nearly the size of a large turkey. It had a horny bill and no teeth so it ate foods like fruits, berries, and insects.

Oviraptor could handle eggs easily with their hands. They could peck holes in the shells with their bills. Oviraptor would crack open the eggs of other dinosaurs and suck them dry.

Oviraptor's only defense against enemies was its speed.

The Oviraptor was an egg stealer

PROCOMPSOGNATHUS
(pro-comp-SOG-na-thus)

Procompsognathus means "first elegant jaw". It was a tiny meat eater, which probably fed on small lizard-like animals or on small amphibians. The Procompsognathus was very lightly built with long hind legs, tail and a long flexible neck.

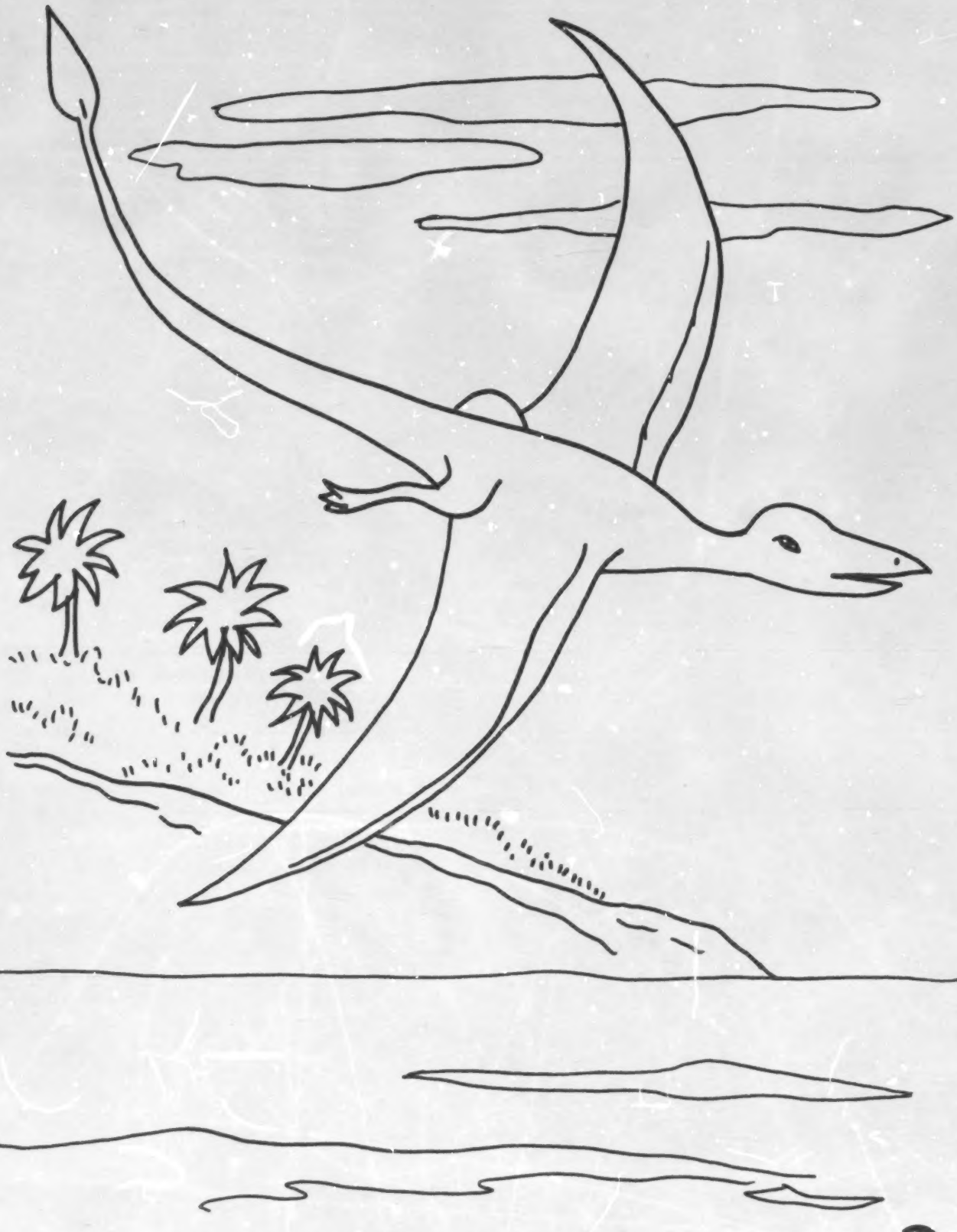
Procompsognathus could run very fast on its hind legs to catch food and escape from enemies.

Procompsognathus was very small

RHAMPHORHYNCHUS
(ram-for-RINK-us)

Rhamphorhynchus means knife beak. Rhamphorhynchus was a reptile about the size of a large rooster. From the top of its beak to the end of its reptilian tail was about 18 inches long. At the end of the tail was a rudder.

Rhamphorhynchus had many sharp teeth, all pointing forward. Their chief use was for spearing fish. Rhamphorhynchus probably spent most of its time gliding low over the water looking for fish. Hollow bones made it light enough for gliding. It also hunted small animals.



A flying reptile, the Rhamphorhynchus

WHY DINOSAURS DISAPPEARED

Dinosaurs were once the lords of the earth. Why did they disappear? Part of the reason is because their bodies were too large for their brains. They lived on the earth as long as they did because conditions on the earth stayed almost the same for millions of years.

After the great plant-eating dinosaurs such as Brontosaurus and Diplodocus had been on the earth for millions of years, the land rose in many places and many of the swamps and ponds dried up. There were fewer places where the water could help the huge plant-eating dinosaurs hold up their great bodies. There was less food, too. They all died.

Smaller plant-eating dinosaurs lived on for millions of years but for some reason they died out, too. As soon as the plant-eating dinosaurs were done, meals for the flesh-eating dinosaurs were very scarce. All the great flesh-eating dinosaurs soon died.

In some places where the dinosaurs lived, the climate became colder at the same time that the ponds and swamps were drying up. This change in climate may be one reason why the dinosaurs disappeared in those places. The dinosaurs were cold blooded. They did not have any way of keeping their bodies warm in cold surroundings.

The dinosaurs may have lasted longer if they had taken better care of their young. They laid eggs and went off and left the eggs. For millions of years this worked well. But in the places where the climate grew colder, the eggs probably did not hatch as well as they had before. Some of the first mammals and later dinosaurs started stealing dinosaur eggs. If most of their eggs were eaten or did not hatch, the dinosaurs were almost sure to become fewer. The last dinosaurs disappeared about 60 million years ago.

DINOSAUR RIDDLES-NAME ME!

1. I was the meanest dinosaur of all. All the other dinosaurs were scared of me. I used my long, sharp teeth to eat them. I am _____.

2. When Tyrannosaurus Rex came after me, I used my three horns to fight him. _____ is my name.

3. I looked like a turtle but I was as big as a car. I used my tail to hit my enemies. I was not good to eat, because my skin was full of spikes. I am the _____.

4. When Tyrannosaurus was near, I hid in the water. My bill looked like that of a duck. My tail was like an alligator's. I ate plants with my 2,000 teeth. _____ is my name.

5. I was one of the fastest dinosaurs. I was a bit taller than a man. But I looked like an ostrich. I'm _____.

6. I was not a dinosaur or bird. I was a reptile. And I could fly. My name is _____.

Answers: 1. Tyrannosaurus Rex, 2. Triceratops, 3. Ankylosaurus, 4. Trachodon, 5. Ornithomimus, 6. Rhamphorhynchus

DINOSAUR POEMS

Unfortunately
Dinosaurs lived so long ago
They never had a chance to know
How many kids
Would love to get
A dinosaur to be their pet.

Bobbi Katz

Dinosaurs

Dinosaurs
Do not count
Because they are all
Dead:

None of us
Saw them dogs
Do not even
Know that
They were there

But they
Still walk
About heavily
In everybody's
Head.

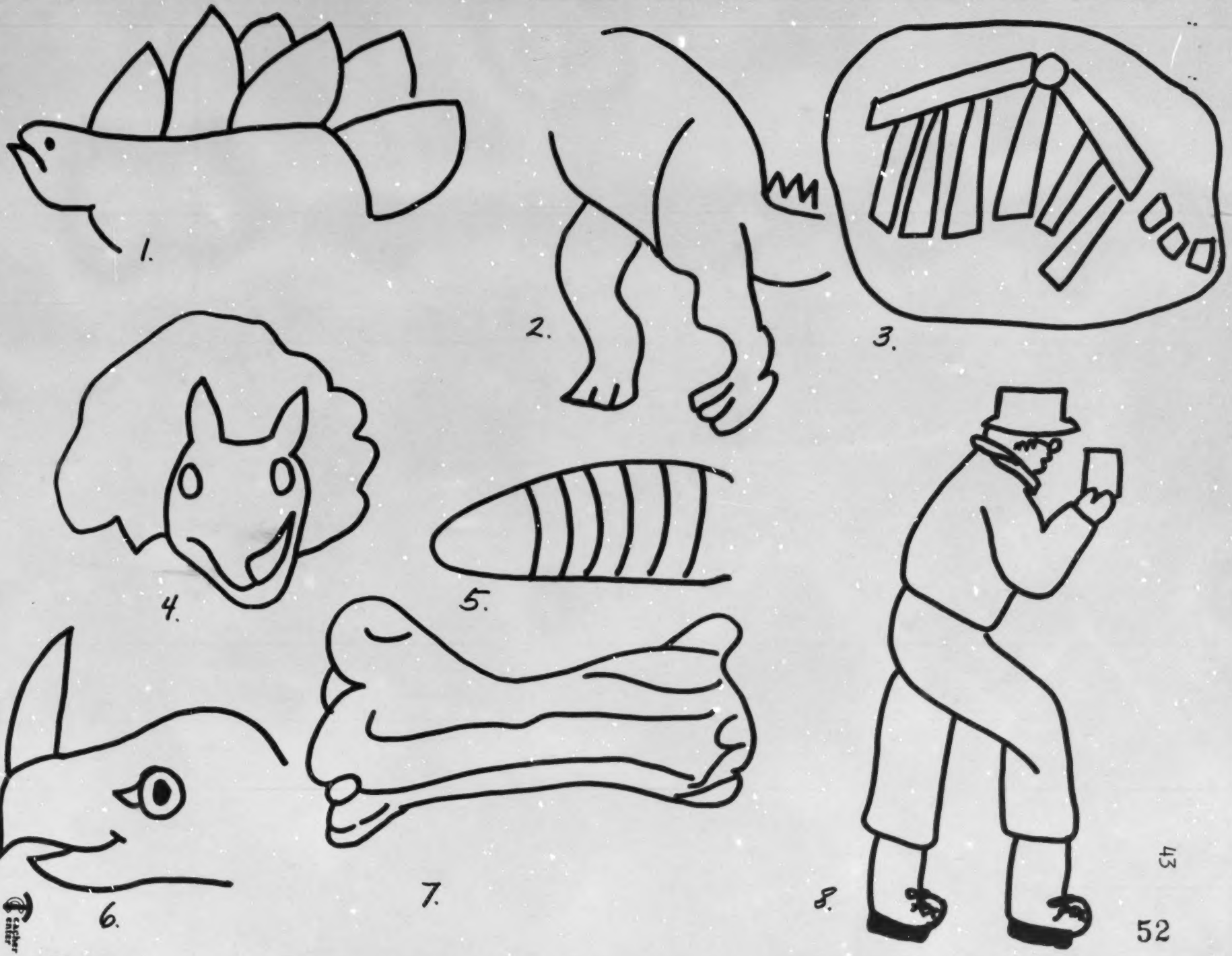
Valerie Worth

DINOSAUR DICTIONARY

Give the students a copy of the pictures on the following page. They will cut out the pictures after they have colored them. On a chart tablet write the words to go with the pictures.

1. spikes
2. back legs
3. fossil
4. collarbone
5. toe
6. horn
7. bone
8. scientist

Give the students 3 pieces of 8 1/2" x 5 1/2" paper which is folded in half. On the outside write My Dinosaur Dictionary. On the following pages put one picture and write the word to go with it.


1.
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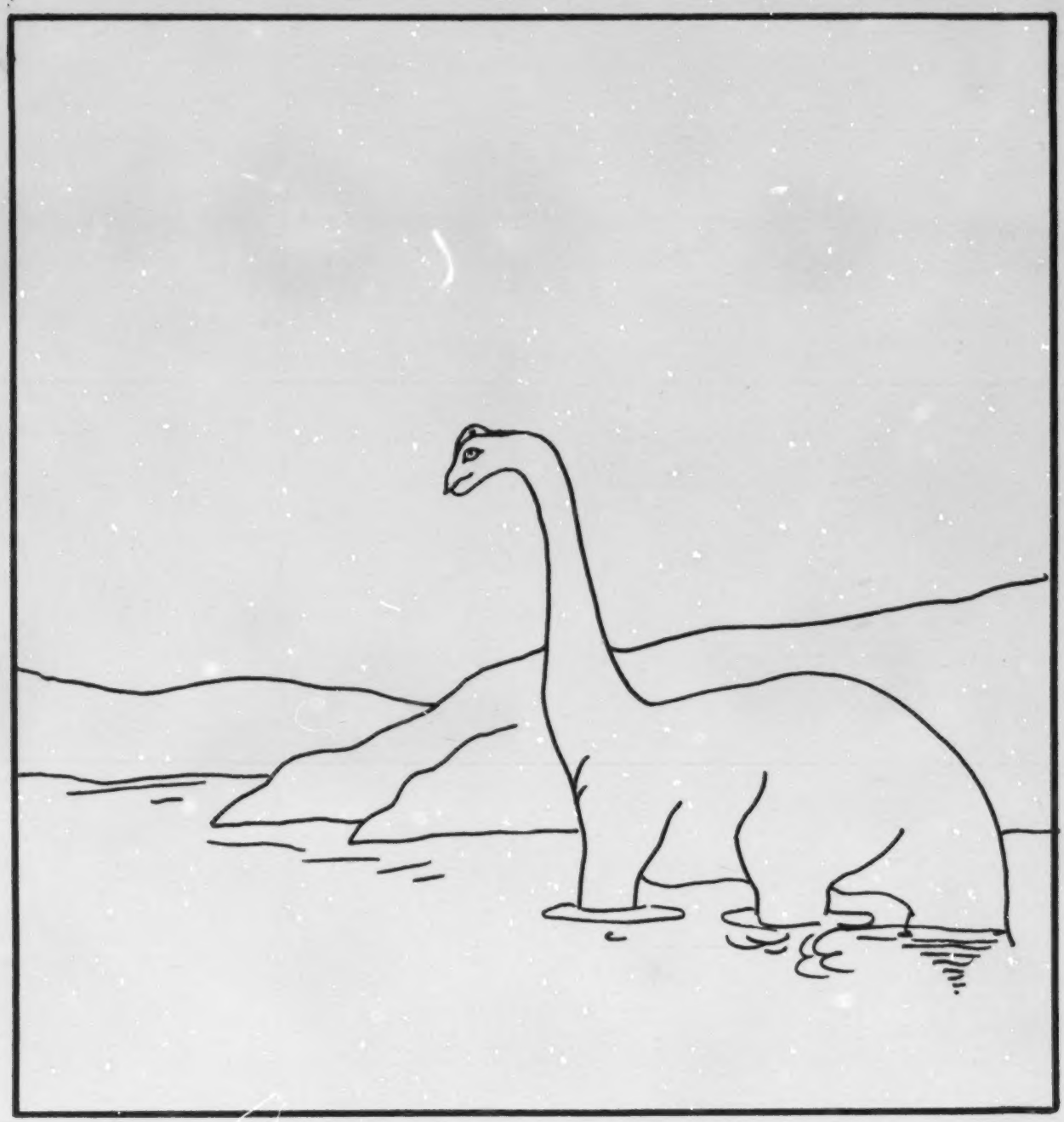
8.

Name: _____ Skill: Following Directions 44



Brachiosaurus

1. Draw a rock in the water.
2. Draw a plant in the dinosaur's mouth.
3. Draw a sun in the sky.
4. Make 2 clouds in the sky.
5. Draw a tree.
6. Color your picture

Name _____ Skill: Comprehension and/or Listening 45

Tyrannosaurus Rex means "king of the tyrant lizards". The Tyrannosaurus was a meat eater. He tore animals apart with his sharp claws and teeth. His teeth were long and sharp like knives. He could take big bites out of animals caught for food.

Tyrannosaurus Rex was 45 feet long from head to tail. He was 20 feet tall. The Tyrannosaurus walked on his strong back legs. He was always looking for animals to kill and eat.

1. What is a good title for this story?
   a. A Giant Plant-Eater
   b. A Giant Meat-Eater
   c. A Cute Dinosaur

2. You can guess that:
   a. Tyrannosaurus Rex was not strong
   b. Tyrannosaurus Rex could fly
   c. Other dinosaurs were afraid of Tyrannosaurus Rex.

3. Match each word with its opposite.

sharp	long
strong	dull
front	weak
short	back

4. How did the Tyrannosaurus Rex walk?

5. How did the Tyrannosaurus Rex use his claws and teeth?

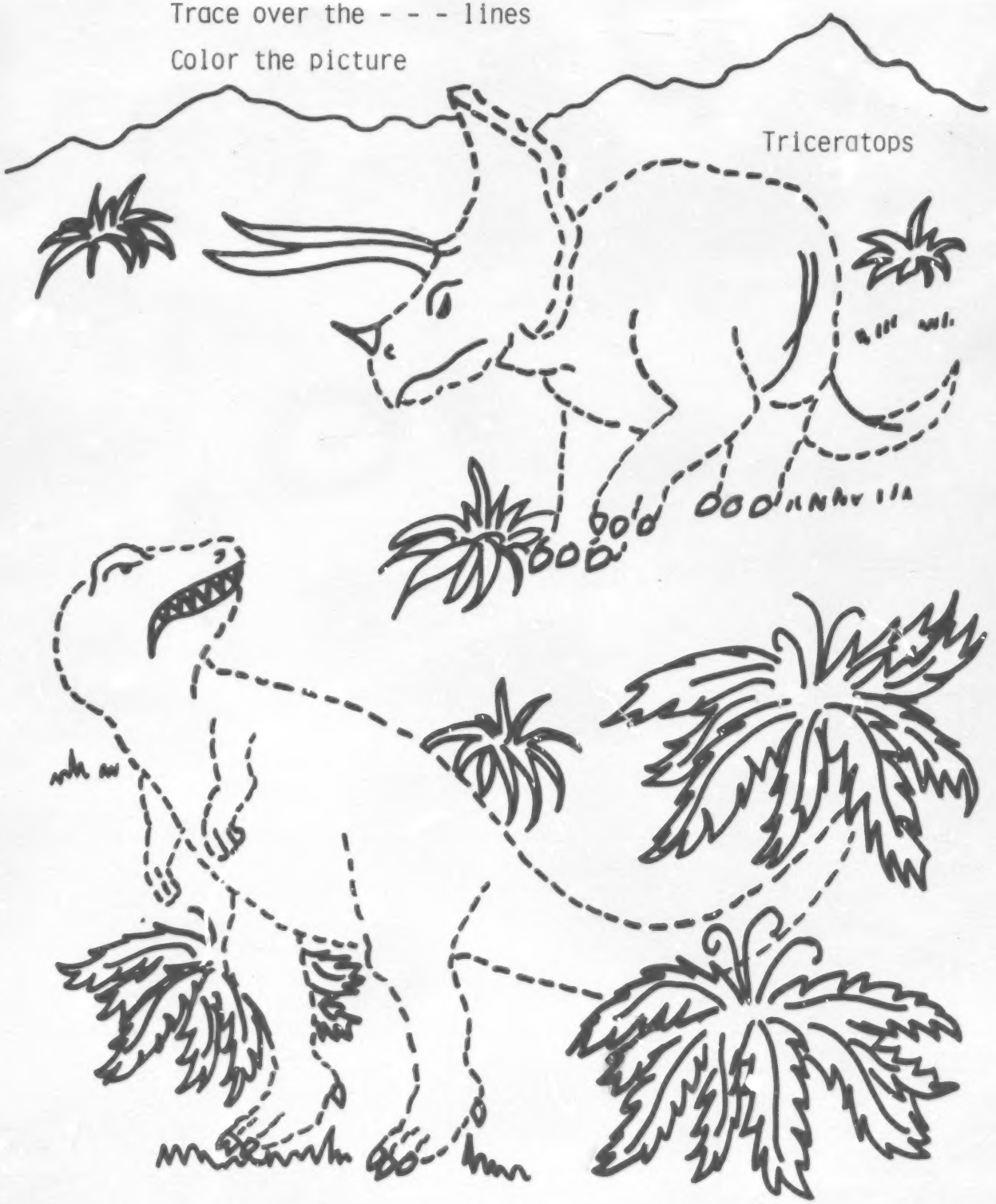
MY FAVORITE DINOSAUR

Draw a picture of your favorite dinosaur. Tell a story about it.

Name _____ Fine Motor Skills 47

Trace over the - - - lines

Color the picture



Tyrannosaurus Rex

Words to use:

big

Brontosaurus

dinosaur

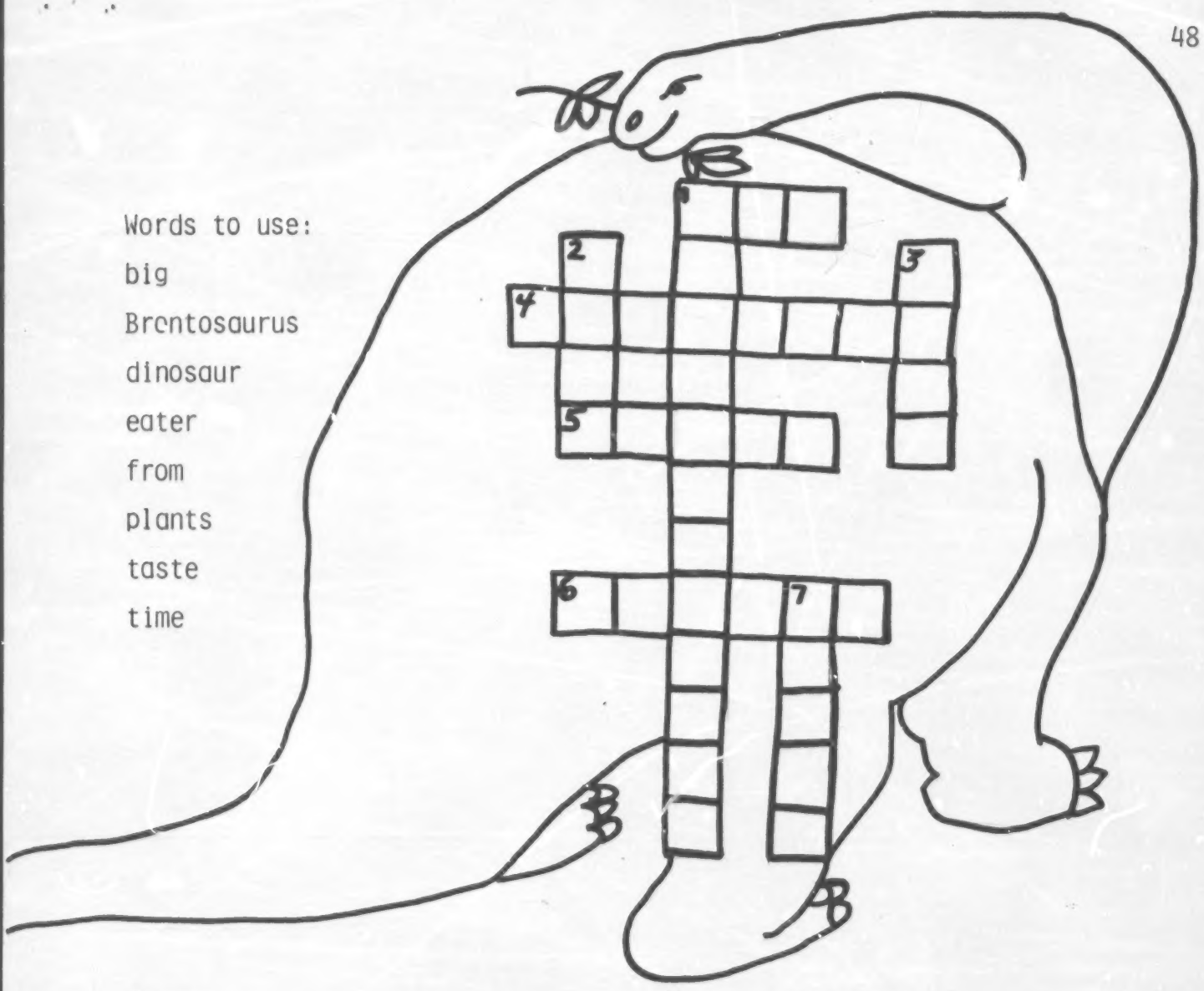
eater

from

plants

taste

time



Across

1. Some dinosaurs were small but most were _ _ _.
4. Tyrannosaurus is the name of a big _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.
5. Tyrannosaurus was a meat eater. Brontosaurus was a plant _ _ _ _ _.
6. Brontosaurus had flat teeth-good for chewing _ _ _ _ _ _.

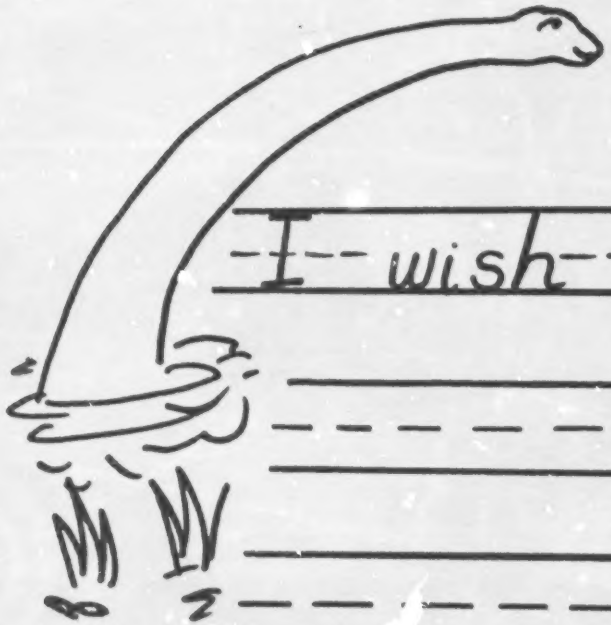
Down

1. This big dinosaur is called _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. Dinosaurs lived a long _ _ _ _ ago.
3. Dinosaur babies hatched _ _ _ _ eggs.
7. Brontosaurus sometimes went into the water to _ _ _ _ _ the water plants.

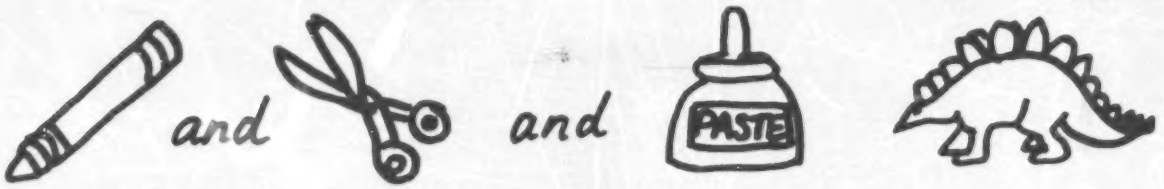
Name:

Skill: Writing

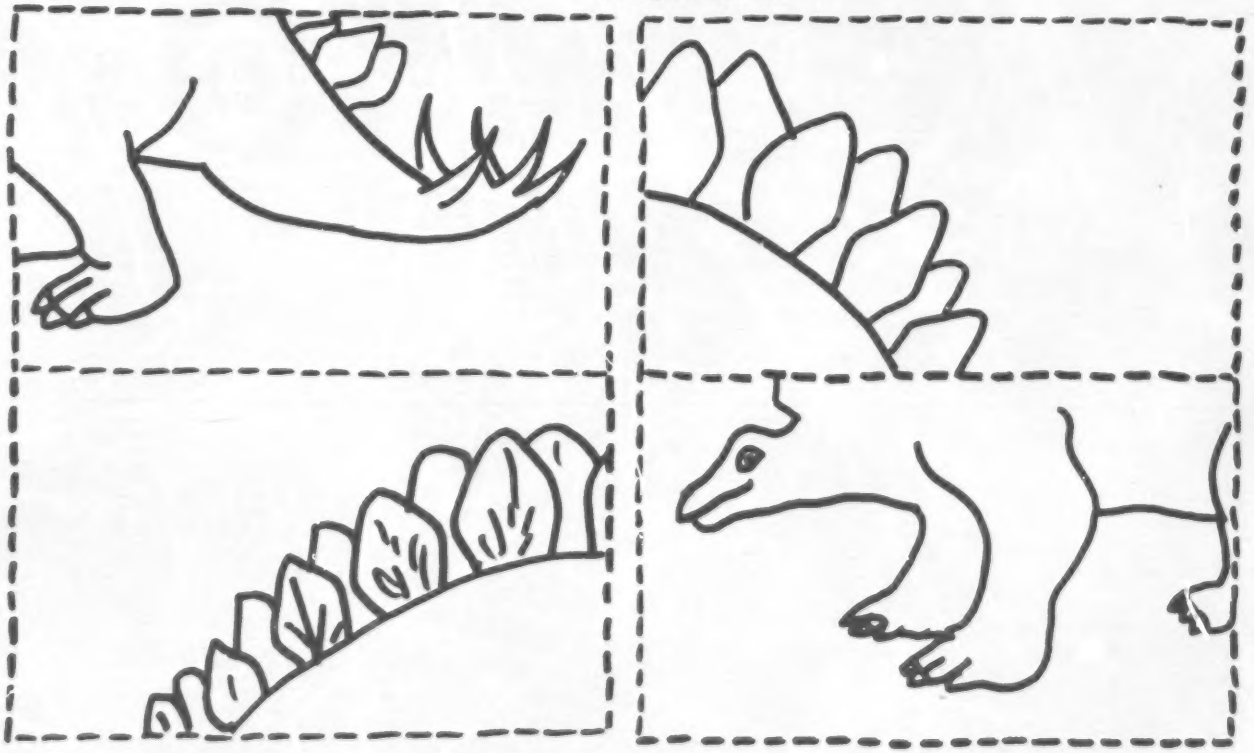
I like dinosaurs.



I wish they lived now!



Stegosaurus



Brontosaurus

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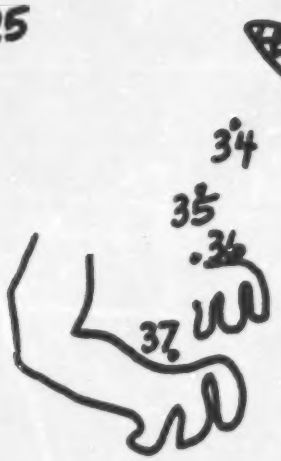
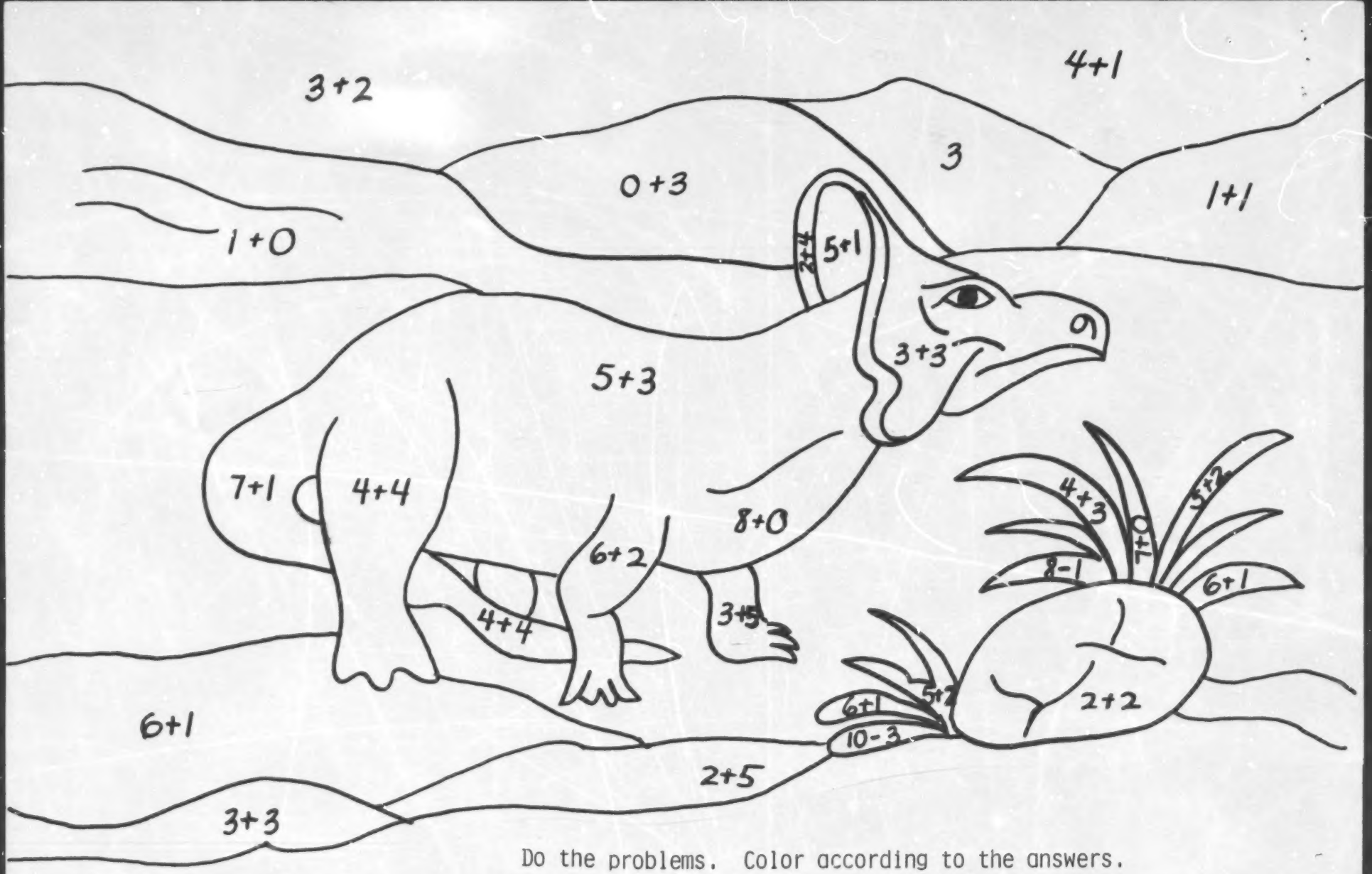
Tyrannosaurus Rex

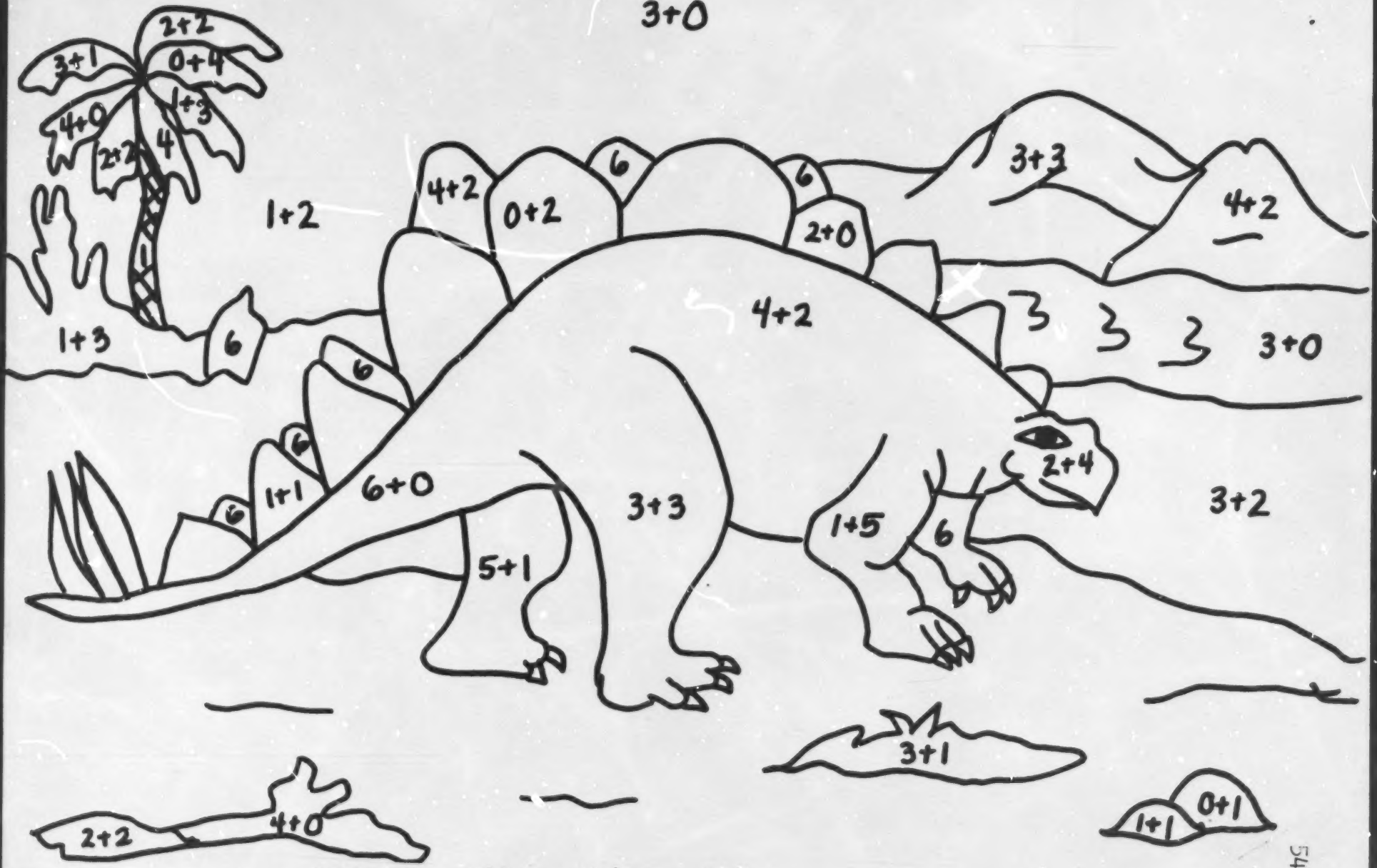




Do the problems. Color according to the answers.
Can you name this dinosaur?

1-orange	3-black	5-blue	7-green
2-yellow	4-white	6-brown	8-grey

53



Answer the problems. Color.

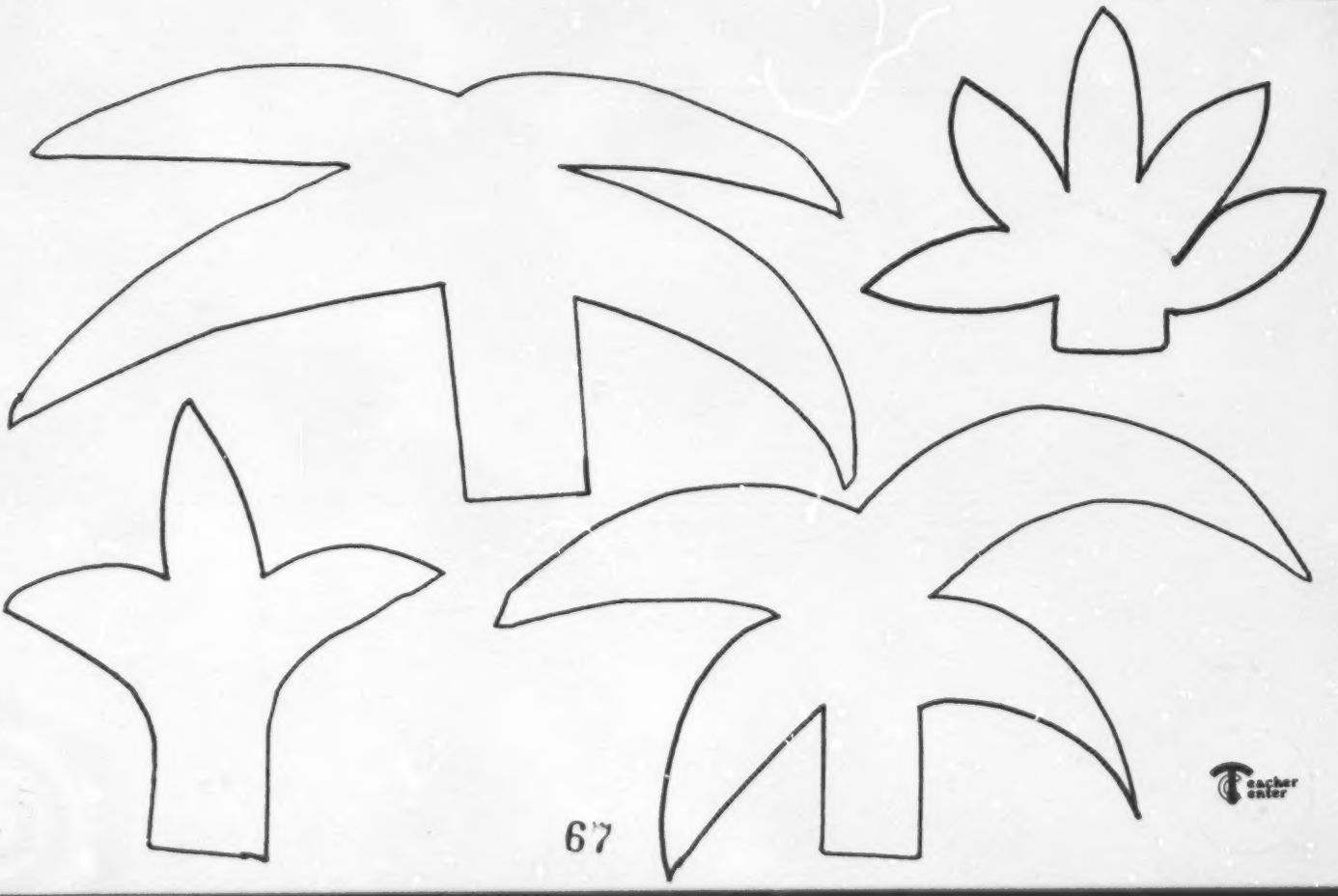
1-black 2-grey 3-blue 4-green 5-orange 6-brown

DINOSAUR DIORAMA

Materials:

1 shoe box for each student
Construction paper
Clay or modeling dough
Tree patterns to trace (if needed)

This is a good activity to use as a culminating activity for the dinosaur unit. Have each child make their favorite dinosaur from clay or modeling dough. Then use construction paper to create a background scenery in the box. Volcanoes, rocks, trees, water, etc., may be put in the background. Let students create their own scenes. A 3-D effect may be achieved by putting standards on the trees to make them stand up.



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